

Katharine Hepburn Stars Again



On May 12 in Old Saybrook, Connecticut, the USPS will issue a 44-cent stamp for Katharine Hepburn. The latest issue in the Legends of Hollywood series honors an actress who in 1999 was ranked by the American Film Institute as the greatest female star in the history of American motion pictures.

Over the course of a long and highly successful movie career, Hepburn was nominated for 12 Best Actress Academy awards and took down a record four Oscars for Best Actress. Her Oscar winning performances ranged from 1933 in *Morning Glory*, through 1967 and 1968 in *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* and *The Lion in Winter* to 1981 for her memorable performance in *On Golden Pond*.

She also won an Emmy for her TV lead role in *Love Among the Ruins* and was nominated for four others as well as for two Tony Awards for her performances on the Broadway stage.

Hepburn was born in Hartford, Connecticut, the daughter of suffragette Katharine Martha Houghton, a co-founder of Planned Parenthood. She followed in the footsteps of her mother and supported many social and political causes, includ-

ing family planning. In 1985 she received the American Humanist Association's Humanist Arts Award.

She also was not afraid of controversy. A declared atheist, she also was falsely branded a communist during the witch-hunting era after she spoke out against the blacklisting of the 1940s on behalf of other Hollywood actors, directors, and screenwriters facing the notorious blacklisting that took place in the 1940s.

The new Katherine Hepburn stamp will be issued on her birth date. Born in 1907, following the death of her older brother, she adopted his November 8th birth date as her own. The true birth date was revealed in her 1991 autobiography.

She died on June 29, 2003, of natural causes at the age of 96.

The new issue brings together two aspects of her career. The stamp portrait is a publicity still from the 1942 film *Woman of the Year*. The photogravure image uses a photo by Steve Schapiro that shows Hepburn as she appeared in the play *West Side Waltz*.

The stamp will be issued in a pressure-sensitive adhesive (PSA) pane of

20 stamps. Derry Noyes converted the images into his stamp design. Noyes also was the Art Director and Typographer for the Hepburn issue.

The Engraver credit was assigned to Trident and the Modeler credit to Avery Dennison. The stamps were printed by Avery Dennison using a gravure engraved process. A total of 50 million stamps will be issued.

The stamp and sheet margin was printed in black and gray. Plate numbers just outside of the four corners of the block of 20 stamps consist of the letter "V" to identify Avery Dennison as the printer, followed by two single digits, one for each print color.

For first day cancellations, the usual rules apply. To service your own covers, purchase the new stamps at your local post office or from a stamp dealer, affix them to envelopes of choice addressed to yourself or others, and send them in an outer envelope to Katharine Hepburn Stamp, Postmaster, 36 Main Street, Old Saybrook, CT 06475-9998. All requests must be postmarked by July 12, 2010.

You may also enclose a large stamped, return addressed envelope if you want your FDCs returned under cover rather than through the mail, during which they may be damaged or jet-spray or otherwise double-cancelled in transit.

USPS Stamp Fulfillment also offers uncached first day covers for new stamp issues and postal stationery items. Each item has an individual catalog number and is offered in their quarterly *USA Philatelic* catalog. Collectors may request a free catalog by writing to Information Fulfillment, U.S. Postal Service, Dept 6270, PO Box 219014, Kansas City, MO 64121-9014, or by phoning 800-STAMP-24. First day covers remain on sale for at least one year after the stamp's issuance.

Most collectors prefer cached covers to blanks with no designs. These may be obtained from FDC cachet makers, either unserved before the issue date or serviced—often in formats and multiples not available from the USPS. Such cached covers may be obtained from *Mekeel's & Stamps* FDC advertisers.